REMARKS

Claims 1-55 are pending with claims 1, 24, 34 and 35 being independent. Claims 40-55 have been added.

The amendment is being made to clarify subject matter and not for distinguishing known references or other reasons related to patentability.

Attached is a marked-up version of the changes being made by the current amendment.

Applicant asks that all claims be examined. Enclosed is a $288.00 check for excess claim fees. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _December 6, 2002_

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Version with markings to show changes made

In the claims:

Claims 1, 5-8, 16-17, 22-32, and 34-35 have been amended as follows:

1.   A computer implemented method of sharing information among members of a group, the method comprising:

storing information about [all] more than one current member[s] of a group in a database;

receiving instructions from at least one current member to invite at least one prospective member to join the group;

sending an invitation to the prospective member to join the group;

receiving [an affirmative] a response from the prospective member;

adding the prospective member to [of] the group as a new member based upon receipt of an affirmative response; and

automatically updating services to current members to account for the new member.

5.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the [affirmative] response comprises receiving the response as an e-mail message.

6.   ·The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the [affirmative] response comprises receiving the response as an instant message.

7.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the [affirmative] response comprises receiving the response in an on-line chat room.

8.   The computer implemented method of claim 1, wherein automatically updating services comprises providing a list of current members that includes the new member[s].

16.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically updating services comprises [sharing] enabling current members of the group to share data files with other current members of the group including the new member.

17.   The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein the data files are provided by the current members of the group.

22.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 further comprising offering new services based upon the current members of the group including the new member.

23.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically updating services comprises providing information in [a] an instant messaging buddy list that includes information for the new member.

24.   A communication system for sharing information among members of a group comprising:
        a group administrator for processing information about the current members of the group;
        a group communicator cooperating with the group administrator for delivering and exchanging information with current and prospective group members; and
        a group information updater cooperating with the group communicator and group administrator for providing automatically updated services to current members including a new member.

25.   The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group administrator further comprises:
        a group member profile server for updating data related to current members including the new member; and

a database connected to the group member profile server for storing data related to current members <u>including the new member</u>.

26.   The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group communicator further comprises:

an instant message host **[complex]** in communication with a client system; and

a login server in communication with a client system and the instant message host **[complex]** for determining whether the client is authorized to access the instant message host **[complex]**.

27.   The communication system of claim 26 wherein the instant message host **[complex]** further comprises:

an instant message server for sending and receiving data; and

a domain server cooperating with the instant message server for providing supporting functions of the instant message host **[complex]**.

28.   The communication system of claim 27 wherein the instant message host **[complex]** further comprises a routing gateway connected to the instant message server.

29.   The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group communicator further comprises:

an **[OSP]** <u>Online Service Provider</u> host **[complex]** in communication with a client system; and

a login server in communication with the client system and the **[OSP]** <u>Online Service Provider</u> host **[complex]** for determining whether the client is authorized to access the **[OSP]** <u>Online Service Provider</u> host **[complex]**.

30.   The communication system of claim 26 wherein the **[OSP]** <u>Online Service Provider</u> host **[complex]** further comprises an **[OSP]** <u>Online Service Provider</u> server for sending and receiving data.

31.   The communications system of claim 24 wherein the group information updater further comprises a user interface for communicating and exchanging data with **[a]** <u>one or more</u> **[member]** <u>members</u> of the group <u>including the new member</u>.

32.   The communications system of claim 31 wherein the user interface resides on an **[OSP]** <u>Online Service Provider</u> host **[complex]**.

34.   A graphical user interface for inviting a prospective member of a group to join the group, the graphical user interface comprising:

    [a message inviting] <u>an invitation for</u> the prospective member to join the group;

    [the] <u>a</u> name of the group;

    [the] <u>a list of one or more</u> current members of the group;

    and a tool for the prospective member to respond to the invitation.

35.   A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium, **[the method]** comprising <u>instructions for</u>:

    storing information about **[all]** <u>more than one</u> current member**[s]** of a group <u>in a database</u>;

    receiving instructions from at least one current member to invite at least one prospective member to join the group;

    sending an invitation to the prospective member to join the group;

    receiving **[an affirmative]** <u>a</u> response from the prospective member;

    adding the prospective member to the group as a new member <u>based upon receipt of an affirmative response</u>; and

    automatically updating services to current members to account for the new member.